

CLAIMS

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A system for providing controlled inventory depletion of
5 time-sensitive inventory from a supplier site having at existing business management systems comprising:

a front-end process for identifying time-sensitive inventory to be offered for selective sale;

a sell off component for offering inventory for selective
10 sale and for handling communications with prospective buyers; and

a back-end process for automatically integrating the results of the selective sale into the management systems at said supplier site.

2. The system of Claim 1 wherein said sell off component
15 comprises:

an inventory control component for tracking items of inventory and maintaining records therefor;

an offer preparation component for preparing offers for inventory sell off; and

20 a sell off management component.

3. The system of Claim 2 wherein said inventory control component comprises means for automatically identifying time-sensitive inventory for sell off.

4. The system of Claim 3 wherein said inventory control
5 component comprises means for updating records of items which are identified for sell off.

5. The system of Claim 3 wherein said inventory control component is adapted to communicate item-specific information to said offer preparation component.

10 6. The system of Claim 5 wherein said offer preparation component is adapted to create at least one sell off file based on said item-specific information.

7. The system of Claim 5 wherein said offer preparation component comprises means for dynamically creating at least one
15 sell off file comprising item-specific information and auction control data.

8. The system of Claim 5 additionally comprising an auction tracking component for maintaining historical auction data.

9. The system of Claim 8 wherein said offer preparation component comprises means for dynamically creating at least one sell off file comprising item-specific information and said historical auction data.

5 10. The system of Claim 2 further comprising means for advertising said offers for sell off.

11. The system of Claim 10 wherein said means for advertising said offers for sell off comprises a web browser for posting offers on at least one web page.

10 12. The system of Claim 10 wherein said means for advertising said offers for sell off comprises an electronic mail server for distributing said offers via electronic mail.

13. A method for providing controlled inventory depletion of time-sensitive inventory comprising:

15 a front-end process identifying time-sensitive inventory to be offered for selective sale;

a sell off component offering inventory for selective sale and for handling communications with prospective buyers; and

a back-end process automatically integrating the results of
20 the selective sale into the yield and revenue management systems at the supplier site.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein said offering inventory comprises the steps of:

identifying items of inventory for sell off;

preparing offers for inventory sell off; and

5 managing the sell off of said inventory.

15. The method of Claim 14 wherein said identifying items comprises automatically identifying time-sensitive inventory for sell off.

16. The method of Claim 15 further comprising updating records
10 of items which are identified for sell off.

17. The method of Claim 15 further comprising communicating item-specific information to said offer preparation component.

18. The method of Claim 17 wherein said offer preparing comprises creating at least one sell off file based on said
15 item-specific information.

19. The method of Claim 17 wherein said offer preparing comprises dynamically creating at least one sell off file comprising item-specific information and auction control data.

20. The method of Claim 17 additionally comprising maintaining historical auction data.

21. The method of Claim 20 wherein said offer preparing comprises dynamically creating at least one sell off file
5 comprising item-specific information and said historical auction data.

22. The method of Claim 14 further comprising the step of advertising said offers for sell off.

23. The method of Claim 22 wherein said advertising said offers
10 for sell off comprises posting offers on at least one web page.

24. The method of Claim 22 wherein said advertising said offers for sell off comprises distributing said offers via electronic mail.

25. The method of Claim 22 further comprises identifying a
15 target group for said offers and wherein said advertising comprises providing electronic mail only to said target group.

26. A program storage device readable by machine tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine for

performing a method for providing controlled inventory depletion of time-sensitive inventory, said method comprising the steps of:

a front-end process identifying time-sensitive inventory to be offered for selective sale;

5 a sell off component offering inventory for selective sale and for handling communications with prospective buyers; and

a back-end process automatically integrating the results of the selective sale.